

A

## SERIOUS ADDRESS

TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

GREAT-BRITAIN,

AND

IRELAND;

---

*Boast not thyself of To-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*

PROV. xxvii. 1.

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*Memento mori.*

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SECTION 1

TO

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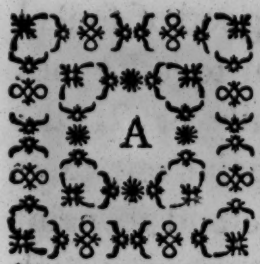
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A  
S E R I O U S  
A D D R E S S, &c.

 LARMED by the licentious and immoral actions, prophane and blasphemous language, that is so common amongst the irreligious part of mankind, makes me pursue this method to address them in a manner becoming a Christian. I shall, in order to take away the prejudice that the populace may censure, tell them my motive for writing this pamphlet, is not with a view of gain (God forbid that I should be

stirred up to write for gain ! ) it is for the cause of Christ alone.

But, in order to come to the point I propose, I shall, in the first place, observe and take notice of the most obvious sins that are daily committed by the carnal world : secondly, I shall take notice what will be the fatal effects of continuing in such sins, and, thirdly, advise how such sins may be done away. And, o God supreme and omniscient ! do thou enable me so to write, that it may be to the good of souls ! In the first place, then, I am to take notice of the immoral vices daily practised : but, say, can I pretend to paint out these vices ? No, nor do I pretend to paint them out in their horrid scenes in which they are acted.

Swearing is now become so heinous amongst us, that, unless a person (as the term is) can swear a round hand, and call down the eternal God of glory, to witness their immoral actions and impious oaths, he is looked on as a fool, and despised as a coward.

Drun-



Drunkenness is become so habitual, that you will scarce go into an ale-house or tavern, but there you will see the drunkard, passing, as he says, a few tedious hours over his cups.

Debaucheries are as frequent as any vice that dwells amongst us : you will scarce go into the street at night, but the man of taste and life has his lady in his cursed embraces. Thus harlots and their associates spend their tedious, lingering hours, of night.

Plays, operas, assemblies, &c. are the greatest enjoyments (say they) a person possibly can attain to. If a serious person objects any of these things, especially a play; what is then said of him? why, he hath no sense, taste, nor life. A man is never said to know any thing of life till he can visit the play-house, night after night; and bawl, and be the principal leader of those vices God so abominates.

Parties of pleasure on a Sunday is the only time they think they can enjoy pleasure.

sure. Why, pray, on a Sunday? Because that is a day God hath set apart for himself; and, the more they break God's holy law, the more they glory in it. Not only so, but, other days, they are obliged to work, to defray the expences of the sabbath (that they willingly do) they will work like negroes all the week, but they will have recreation on a Sunday. O God do thou, in mercy, give them to see their errors ere it be too late.

I now come to the second point proposed. O thou Almighty God of Heaven, who art the fountain of all wisdom! do thou grant that I may rightly and justly observe the things proposed: and do thou, in thy infinite mercy, grant, that they may be so observed, that it may be for the benefit of immortal souls.

The commandment of the Most High God is broken in the first notorious sin taken notice of [swearing.] Thou shalt not take my name in vain, says the most holy God and King of Heaven. Where is the wretch

wretch that dares violate this command of God ? I, says the reprobate, will make use of it to confirm my hellish devices, and to entertain my jovial companions. I will let you see I'll violate the command, and utter oaths and blasphemies as fast as utterance will permit, even in opposition to God himself (if there be any) I am no such coward ; whilst I live I will live to satisfy my hellish inclinations. Amazing goodness ! and are these wretches yet alive ? are they yet permitted to blaspheme thy most sacred name, o God ! It is no wonder the wretch questions the being of a God. No. Did he think or entertain the least idea of a revenging God, he would not then dare continue in this state of prophaness and immorality. Wretch as thou art, consider, that eternal vengeance is hovering over thy guilty head, and ready to sink thy soul into eternal perdition. Consider, thou borderest on the narrow verge of eternity. Eternity ! how the word reverberates eternity, what the

the endless ages of eternity, to be endured by my poor Christless soul, in the burnings of Hell-fire, and everlastingly to dwell with devils and cursed fiends? Yes: and if ever thou comest there (as thou surely wilt, unless thou turnest and beggest and suest for mercy at the throne of Jesus) thou wilt acknowledge and cry out, eternal burning justly is my lot. O wretched soul, consider, it is not yet too late! the Lord yet may be gracious unto thy immortal soul! there is grace sufficient in Jesus to cleanse thee from all unrighteousness. Jesus is merciful to the sincere penitent. O consider, and turn quickly, ere the door of mercy is shut up for ever; consider what one night may bring forth. Thou mayst, ere the morning, be lifting up thine eyes in torments, and, from thence there is no redemption, o how wilt thou then curse thine unhappy condition! there to pass the revolving ages of eternity! O God grant, that we may all make the best use of our time whilst we re-

main



main here ! O that we may come to the  
 foot of thy throne, and there plead for  
 mercy in the blood of Jesus ! O thou  
 lamb of God do thou take away all our  
 sins. I come to thee, o Jesus, not con-  
 sidering in my own strength or righteou-  
 ness, but rely totally on the merits of thy  
 cross ! O Lord ! do thou crucify all my  
 affections to this world more and more ;  
 and, do thou enable me to praise and  
 magnify thy glorious name ; thou com-  
 passionate Redeemer !

O drunkard awake ! thou that art now  
 asleep over thy cups, awake ! Considerest  
 thou, o drunkard, the state of thy never  
 dying soul ? It is not for me to consider  
 the soul, I must enjoy myself now, says  
 he, that is all I care for. I see nothing,  
 says he, can give me comfort but my pot ;  
 it drowns sorrow, and banishes care, and  
 makes the tedious moments of time slide  
 on unobserved ! Sliding time, indeed !  
 Time, what is it to be trifled with in so  
 slight a manner ? What, have we so  
 much time, that we can pass by years to-  
 gether and take no notice of it ? Is there  
 nothing to be done in time ? Yes, thou



drunkard, thou must quit thy cups, thou must make intercession with Jesus in time, or thou art undone to all eternity. Thou canst not say, I never knew that God forbade drunkenness. No. Thou hast heard from day to day, the sentence that God hath passed on drunkards. Thou hast been exhorted ; yet thou goest still on in thy wickedness. Thou rejectest the reproofs of thy reprovers. Besides, if thou thinkest they deceive thee, thou hast the word of God to refer to. There wilt thou see thy condemnation written. Yet all avails not. Thou still goest on in thy wickedness. Even in opposition to God himself.

It is thy amazing goodness, Father of Mercies, that thou bearest with these our iniquities. It is unutterable mercy that keeps us from hell. Had we had our deserts, o God, we had, long ago, been, Dives like, lifting up our eyes in Hell. Yet, this seems, as it were impossible with men. O how do they intrude on divine goodness. Lord we bless thee that we are yet in the land of the living ! Remember thou drunkard, there is no repentance in the grave ! if thou dyest asleep in drunkenness,

ennels, the flames of Hell, will, alas ! too late, rouze thy stupid, drowzy, conscience ! O how wilt thou then cry out, o that I had not rejected the crucified Jesus, or blasphemed his name ! o that I had not pleased my cursed sensuality ! that I had not been so lulled on ! Thus is the case of a soul, when he is within the confines of Hell. Thus hath it been the case of many poor souls who little valued time here ; who put a slight on eternity ; could scoff at a future state ; could laugh at the folly of a faithful soul, enjoying the spirit of God here. O Lord Christ ! if it be thy blessed will, do thou bring us to the footstool of thy throne ! there may we receive a full remission of all our sins ! and may thy blessed spirit dwell in us to all eternity !

Thou shalt not commit adultery, is the express command of God. Dost thou hear, thou whoremonger ? No : he is fast in the embraces of the harlot, surfeited with wine, he rambles to the stews, there, to satisfy his cursed carnality, will he debauch his body with whores. His mouth shall be venting oaths as fast as possible, and calling down the vengeance of

the eternal God. There will he drink till his body becomes, as it were, and frequently is, a lifeless corps. I lately heard of two young men going to a disorderly house, in order to satisfy their carnal desires. Remorse of conscience stung one so deep that he left the other to carouse and regale himself. Two days after this, he that went away came by this disorderly house, when, behold a hearse stood at the door and the young man, his companion, was then going to be carried away in it. The young man that died was in bed between two harlots midst all the terrors of death got on him, and, a few moments after, expired in the most agonizing pains. Now, pray, canst thou tell why this may not be thy case, thou whore-monger? hast thou an assurance of thy life more than he? He, doubtless, went into this place of destruction, thinking to enjoy himself and come out again. False enjoyment, this! may God keep us from all such delusions! May we bring all our evil doings to the cross of Christ! may they there be crucified, to the unspeakable joy of our immortal souls! O God,

do

do thou give the whoremonger to see his wretchedness in time, to his eternal advantage in eternity ! O may we be brought to a sincere repentance, before we come upon the narrow verge of an awful eternity ! may we all come to thee, the God of all mercies, as blind and naked, desiring to be cloathed by Jesus only ! Lord, we do not trust in our own strength, it is by thy merits and blood we expect to be saved ! Lord Christ ! do thou give us thy witnessing spirit here, and never take it from us !

I do not remember, that, in the holy bible I ever saw that God commanded people to go to plays, &c. &c. &c. What sayst thou, o thou pleasure-taking son of mirth, dost thou ? If he be honest in his answer, he will tell you he never looked into the bible to see. Neither (says he) do I think that the bible be a proper book for a young person's meditation : for I am acquainted with some few who make it their business to be religious, and they have got some advantage by it too : they have lost their senses, they are grown melancholy. They are continually praying  
and



and exhorting others to do so too. Now (says he) [the carnal soul] who do you think right? appeal to sense. I go to plays and operas, assemblies and cards. If, at any time indisposed by health, instead of a prayer-book I take a play book, read it through, and am revived; my spirits again resume their former courage. He, on the other hand, goes mourning all the day, praying, advising, &c. If he hath any leisure time, he dedicates it to the bible, there he finds some puzzling text which turns his brain to construe; then he prays again, and so his life becomes one continued round of melancholy. Well, but thou man of taste, a word with thee. Would this dear soul exchange his condition with thee when he comes to die? No, not for ten thousand worlds! no, he finds the blessed advantage of enjoying and communing with his God here, and thou thyself (to thy unspeakable grief) findest, that that life he spent here [the Christian] was not so sorrowful as thou thoughtst! no, he happily experienced the ways of the living God to be ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace!

Mistake



Mistake not, o sinner! religion never was designed to make our pleasures less. If we walk close with our God here, we shall, hereafter experience the happy advantages of it to all eternity. Who is there then, when he comes to die, if he hath lived ever so carnally, but would cry out (if the weak dissolving frame of nature would permit him) O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his! God grant thou mayest see, not only see the necessity of dying, but that thou mayest die the death of the righteous! It is amazing that thou who goest on still in thy wickedness wilt not hearken or take a word in season. Pray dost thou think thou shalt ever die? dost thou ever think to make up one of the Heavenly redeemed? Yes (says he) I believe I may die, but I am young. And, as to a share in Heaven, I think I have as great a right to it as thou hast. O sinner, suffer not Satan, the old deluder of souls, to blind thy eyes so far! Thou art young, thou sayest, I think. Let me desire thee to go to the church-yard, there thou wilt find the young

young, as well as old, gone down to the place of skulls, the place appointed for all living. There the tomb-stone will tell thee the dust that it now covers was, some short time ago, a fine lusty young man, taken off suddenly; yea, in the midst of his carnal pleasures, was he summoned away to be tried at the tribunal seat of Christ Jesus, the judge of all men. The sentence he received is best known to the poor soul. You may see in the church the reliques of the brave, the once Right Hon. they lie in the church, the common church-yard is not the place they chuse: they would not have their fine dust mixed with the vulgar dead. No, they were superior to them in this life, but, blessed be God! we find, that, hereafter, no respect will be paid to mortal dignity. They will be arraigned at the common bar of Christ, there to give an account of their mis-spent life, and receive their final doom, whether it be Heaven or Hell. If they broke the law here, and were indicted for the same; they had interest here, they could make excuses and elegant pretences. But, my dear friends, will this be the case by and by? no: God will

will not hear them, he will not listen to them : God is just, and his justice will take place. But attend thy ear, o poor of the earth ! think not that thy Heaven is gained by thy outward poverty : or, that the rich of this world will meet with more rigid justice than thou. No, no : it is the poor in spirit ; they that see themselves lost and undone sinners, and who come to Jesus to have their iniquities washed away by his blood ! it is these that shall obtain mercy in the day of his coming. It is the self-righteous pharisee who builds on his own foundation ; it is he who thinks himself rich in works. Such as these the Lord rejects. If you have a mind to see God with satisfaction, you must be stripped of all self-righteousness, you cannot work out your own salvation, if you could there had been no need of a Saviour. Then the dear Jesus need not to have died the shameful and agonizing death of the cross. It is Jesus alone that will bring you to Heaven and glory. Who is there now among you can hear of the suffering of the dear Lord Jesus, without his heart melting into love, to think that the spotless King of Heaven  
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should

should come down to spend a life of sorrow  
 and die an ignominious death, to save a lost  
 race. O love, how deep! can any one now  
 trifle with time? can he say he hath any time  
 to spare, any time to lose or spend in trifling?  
 no: were we to have no business to mind,  
 we should not have time enough to be speak-  
 ing of our dying redeemer. How is it  
 then on God's most holy days [Sundays]  
 people can spend their precious time in  
 walking in the fields, in going on the wa-  
 ter, &c. Consider o thou drowzy soul  
 and awake thou that sleepest! I conjure thee,  
 by the most holy Lord God of Heaven, to  
 awake, to come to Jesus and sue for mercy  
 ere it be too late: yea, come now, this is  
 the accepted time, this is the day of salva-  
 tion. Come, while yet the doors of the  
 Lord are open. Is it possible that one can  
 still go on in his wickedness, when he knows  
 if he dies in that state he is damned to all  
 eternity! O God! will it be possible that  
 a soul, at the last great day, can bear that  
 soul rending sentence, Depart from me, ye  
 cursed, into everlasting fire. I know you not.  
 There is no hope that this will kill the sin-  
 ner's soul, so as to be reduced into his primi-  
 tive



tive nothing : no ; he is dead, as to God, but alive for ever to bear the unutterable torments of Hell. For ever, did I say ! the words, how deeply they inculcate eternity on the sinner's soul ! for ever ! what, after millions of years have performed their annual course, will not eternity then be at an end ? no, nor after millions of centuries, will it then have no end ? no : nor as it were but then beginning. O may the young and aged sinner be awakened ! may Christ of his infinite mercy grant.

I come now to the third point, to observe how such sins may be done away ! O Christ do thou enable me to impart to sinners the word of truth ! I have been just mentioning the gross sins of the age, and what will be the fatal consequences of continuing in them. When the sinner begins to find out his lost state by nature, and is brought to see himself a guilty, helpless wretch, he cries out, Lord, what shall I do to be saved ? I answer, in order to thy attaining salvation, thou must come to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, as a poor undone sinner, as one that expects not to gain Heaven by his own works, but relies totally on the



cross of Christ; firmly believes that there  
 is grace in Christ to cleanse him from all  
 unrighteousness; that, had it not been for  
 the coming of Christ the Lord, he must  
 have perished to all eternity. He must deny  
 himself for Christ's sake; he must live in  
 unity and godly love; that he must have the  
 witnessing spirit of God here: my friend,  
 it is not a faint desire will bring us to Heaven  
 and glory, but he that firmly believeth shall  
 be saved. He must not be desirous of this  
 world's goods. If it pleases God to bless his  
 endeavours here, he must liberally bestow to  
 all such as have need. He must improve his  
 talent, not grossly hoarding up earthly dross,  
 no, but, according to his purse must he give.  
 God sent us into this world to act as Chris-  
 tians, and to do to all men as we would they  
 should do by us; we must give to those who  
 are in want, if it is in our power. If a man  
 give let him give freely, God loveth a cheer-  
 ful giver, but, remember that all this is  
 your real duty. O God, do thou grant, that  
 this spirit of liberality may reign more  
 among us than it now does! O Lord, do  
 thou stir up among us a brotherly love!  
 may we help each other both spiritually and  
 tempo-

temporally ! may we always be ready to vindicate the cause of Christ and true religion ! may we (if occasion be) be willing to die for Christ's sake ! Can we do too much for Christ ? no : and were we always to be doing it ; it would by no means be a requital for the least of Christ's favours to us. Let us then unanimously be determined to do all we can for Christ and his followers whilst we are here, and let us strive who can do most for that glorious redeemer, who makes us happy here, and will make us unspeakably happy to all eternity ! May God convert sinners daily from their evil way, and turn their faces Zion-wards ! Lord Jesus do thou look down with an eye of pity on Christless souls ! they that are afar off, may they be brought nigh through the blood of Jesus, may we daily be more and more convinced of sin ! may we more and more love thee, thou dear Redeemer ! and do thou enable us to vindicate thy cause whilst we remain here, and at last bring us to the marriage supper of the Lamb, there to sing eternal praises with the hierarchy of Heaven to him that sitteth on the throne for ever and ever, to which place do thou bring us all, o Christ !

P O S T

## P O S T S C R I P T.

READER, whoever thou art, I am  
 unwilling to leave thee with the former  
 part of this address: I would once more  
 beg, for the sake of thy immortal soul, idly  
 to consider the inestimable blessing of get-  
 ting out of those impious sins aforemen-  
 tioned; I continued too long, God knows,  
 in them myself: but, blessed be God, I  
 can now say, I have found the Lord gra-  
 cious to my soul; and he will be gracious  
 to all that are sincere. The Lord still waits  
 to be gracious; the Lord is long-suffering  
 and of great goodness. But, remember,  
 that the Lord is just as well as merciful;  
 and, after the Lord hath offered thee mer-  
 cy, if thou objectest it, then divine justice  
 will take place. Should we sin that grace  
 might abound? God forbid!! Let us there-  
 fore turn and accept of mercy while it may  
 yet be found, yea, while it is called to day!  
 put not the evil day far from thee, O man!  
 for, notwithstanding thou art robust and vi-  
 gorous, there is one mightier than thou!  
 consider these evangelical words, Except a  
 man be born again he cannot see the king-  
 dom of God. I find I do not

dom of God ! consider, O sinner ! what this regeneration means : hast thou been born again of God ? dost thou possess the spirit of the ever-living God ? if thou dost not possess it, and enterest eternity without it, thou art damned for ever. If thou delightest not in the ways of God now, how dost thou think thou shalt like it in eternity ? Why then (comparatively speaking) Heaven will be to thee as hell. I know the men of this world cannot bear the thoughts of godliness : no ; the Devil reigns too much in their carnal hearts ! thou must possess the spirit of God here, or if thou diest without it, thou must perish (as to God) to all eternity.

As the Tree falleth, so must it lay to all eternity. How can you then laugh and mock at a soul's possessing the spirit of God here ! You'll frequently say, the devil is in such a Person ; I apprehend by that you mean the spirit of the Devil is in him. Why may not the spirit of God abide in a soul then as well as the Devil ? If thou comest once to put the matter to thy conscience, Thou canst not deny it without absolutely saying God lyeth : for discrediting the most sacred



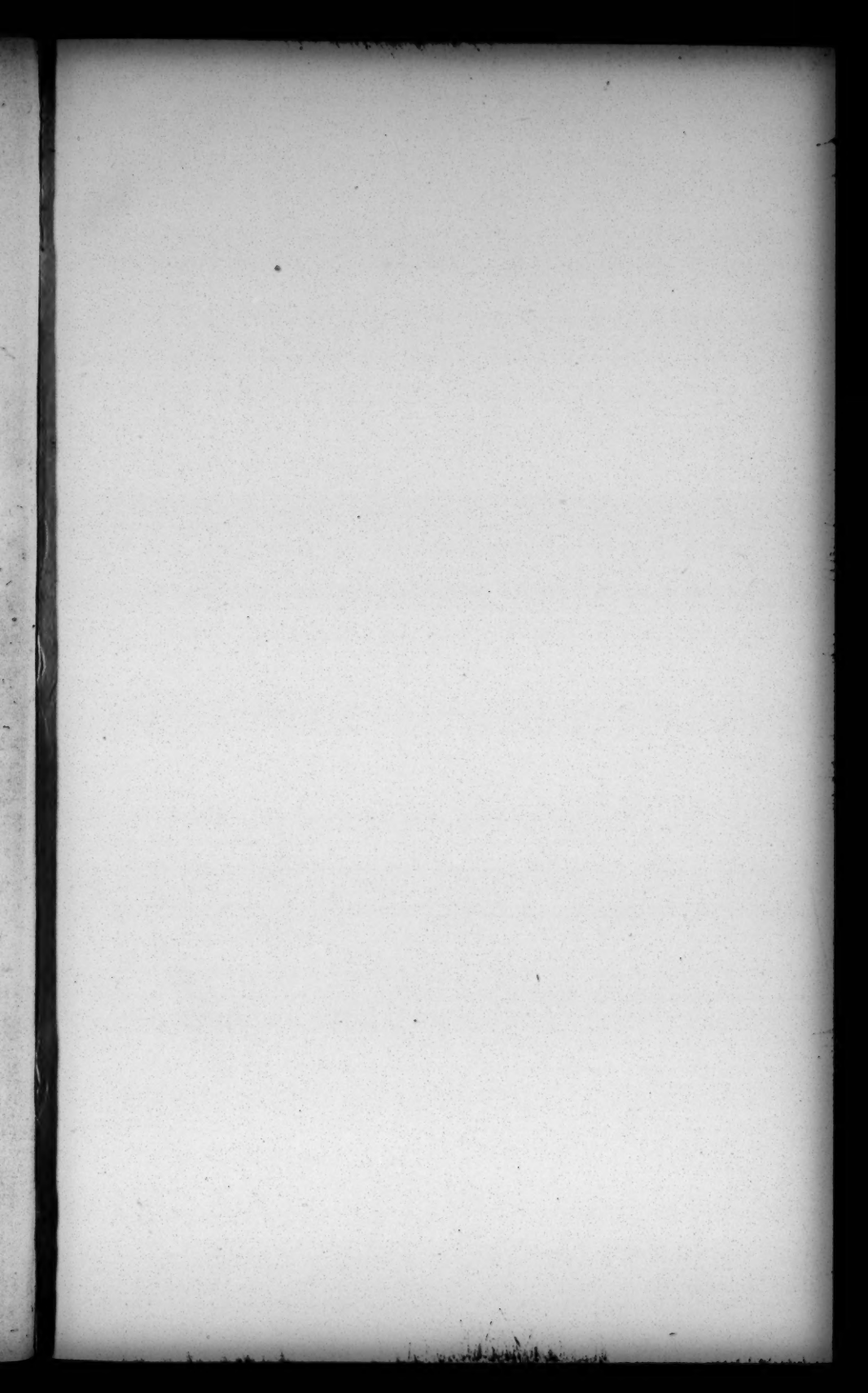
sacred word of God, is just the same as if  
 thou wast to say God is a lyer. O may the  
 most Holy Lord God keep thee from ever  
 coming to this case! O that thou may'st be  
 brought to know in thine heart that the Lord  
 is far from the wicked, but he heareth the  
 prayer of righteousness! Consider my dear  
 friend, thou thyself wilt not approve any one  
 that acts contrary to what thou would'st have  
 them: but if a man petition to thee (provi-  
 ded he does as thou would'st have him) thou  
 grantest his request; therefore do thou fol-  
 low the commandments of God and he will  
 love thee. O what a blessing it is to obtain the  
 love of God in our hearts! O thou dear  
 crucified Saviour, may we possess the in our  
 hearts! and be determined (thro' thy assist-  
 ance) to live to thy glory? and if occasion be,  
 may we willingly die for Christ as he died for  
 us! Well, I hope thou seest by this time  
 the necessity of having the life of God made  
 manifest in the soul! may Christ enable thee  
 to seek after, and mayest thou obtain it, if  
 thou sincerely seekest it! is the sincere desire  
 of thine in Christ Jesus,

The EDITOR.

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F I N I S.





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